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ABSTRACT

A Task Force of developmental education professionals in New York was convened to consider issues related to the evaluation of developmental programs from a statewide perspective. This report provides a summary of the two Task Force sessions and resulting recommendations and plans for action. Introductory material provides background on the program evaluation research that provided the basis for the Task Force's agenda. The next section summarizes the presentations of the keynote speakers at the first Task Force session and introduces the focus of small and large group discussions. The following sections examine and offer recommendations and action summaries for the three main issue areas: (1) the extent to which consensus can be reached regarding terminology; i.e., can meaningful distinctions be made among terms such as developmental, remedial, basic skills education, or academic skills education; (2) the manner in which related factors and issues influence program evaluation and resulting judgements; and (3) the extent to which consensus on criteria and evaluation standards should be achieved versus the need for local flexibility and program variance. Finally, a summary of conclusions is presented, highlighting the need to develop consensus on terminology; to deal with evaluation in the context of practices and processes such as budgeting, student demographics, and college structure; and to maintain local flexibility on assessment processes. A summary of the second Task Force session and data on developmental programs are appended. (HB)

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Assessment of Effectiveness

ED255275

ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS FOR POSTSECONDARY OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: A TASK FORCE REPORT

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JC 850 144

September 1984
Two-Year College Development Center
State University of New York at Albany

ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS FOR POSTSECONDARY OCCUPATION STUDENTS:

A Task Force Report

An Activity of

Assessment of Developmental Programs
in Postsecondary Occupational Education:
Phase II
(VEA 58-84-9378)

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SEPTEMBER 1984

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INTRODUCTION

A Task Force of professional developmental educators was convened to consider issues related to evaluation of developmental programs from a statewide perspective. The Task Force was an activity of the project, Assessment of Developmental Programs in Postsecondary Occupational Education (VEA 58-84-9378). The opportunity to participate as a member of the Task Force was extended to staff at the colleges serving as research sites in the project. The Task Force sessions, held in May and September, drew its agenda from problem areas and issues resulting from two cycles of research focusing on evaluation of developmental/remedial/basic skill programs.

During the first cycle of research, data sources included a statewide survey (N = 48) and in-depth investigation of nine sites. Techniques for collecting these data included questionnaires, on-site interviews, reaction sheets and telephone consultations. The specific outcomes were detailed in a previous report which was disseminated statewide.[1] Major objectives were to synthesize program descriptions, ascertain evaluations currently in process, and identify examples of potentially ideal assessment directions.

The second cycle of research grew from results of the previous phase. The major purposes were to validate and update Phase I data, determine which criteria and standards were potentially applicable on a comprehensive scale, develop an evaluation model(s) and summarize evaluation data resulting from local application. Data were collected through a statewide follow-up questionnaire, reaction sheets, and in-depth consultations with the research sites. Ten colleges joined the original nine resulting in 19

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[1] Assessment of Effectiveness: Developmental Programs in Postsecondary Occupational Education. Albany, NY: Two-Year College Development Center, State University of New York at Albany, September 1983.

colleges providing input as research sites in the second cycle. A summary of results is appended to this Task Force Report.

Three major issues emerged from data as problem areas requiring more careful investigation: 1) terminology, 2) impinging factors/issues on evaluation, and 3) criteria/standards for evaluation. Developmental educators from the 19 sites were invited to act as a task force on behalf of other professionals in New York State to determine the extent to which consensus existed among them on selected issues and recommendations relevant to each problem area. In May, 28 developmental educators representing 14 of 19 sites met as a Task Force to address these three major problem areas. In September, 17 representing 9 colleges met to continue consideration of issues. The results of their effort comprise the remainder of this report. Members of the Task Force are:

Gretchen Starks	Community College of the Finger Lakes
Sally Carr Ernest Danforth Margaret Manfredo Jane McGarry	Corning Community College
Tony Hunter	Delhi Agricultural and Technical College
Joanne Curran Richard Koepsell Matthew Skulicz	Erie Community College/City
Nina Luban Tim Tepas	Erie Community College/North
Carol Paskuly Marianne Savino	Erie Community College/South
David Peters Carl Wahlstrom	Genesee Community College
Becky Furlong Craig Hancock Vijay Macwan	Junior College of Albany

Thelma Malle	Kingsborough Community College
Kathleen Bernstein James Deem	Mohawk Valley Community College
Maryanne Kezmarsky Margaret Martin	Rockland Community College
Mary Jane Dike Elaine Heidenstrom Jessie Malheiros	Schenectady County Community College
Phillip L. Chirch	Suffolk County Community College/Brentwood
Mildred A. Green Marian T. Power	Suffolk County Community College.Selden
Marlene Blumin	Tompkins-Cortland Community College
Wendy Paterson Curley	Trocaire College

Project staff wish to acknowledge the contributions, interest and support given by each individual member of the Task Force. Their dedication and concern are a tribute to the professionals in developmental education they represent.

SETTING A PERSPECTIVE

The keynote presenter was charged with providing a framework for action from the perspective of developmental educator and administrator. Dr. Peter Burnham, President of Schenectady County Community College, set the tone by drawing from his vantage point of a former developmental educator, academic dean and currently president of a two-year institution.

He began by providing a historical framework for many questions related to the current problem areas. His presentation noted the lack of incentive in seriously addressing basic skill education coupled with the frustrations of dealing with less than college level courses. The situation is further compounded by the slowly evolving campus commitment to developmental education. The balancing of all programs for cost and efficiency, the nature of the organization and of academia tend to wear down egalitarian motives. Thus, Dr. Burnham urged Task Force members to exert themselves, to become sales people, to seek out administrators and the public on a proactive basis providing information and meaningful data. He cautioned against providing data in isolation; it should relate to strands of other evaluative information that relate to groups within the college or be linked to broad college concerns. He urged seeking strategies to prove the real impact of developmental techniques and activities, and to make this impact visible to the college community as a whole.

In conclusion, he offered the following recommendations to practicing developmental educators:

1. Achieve political parity with other academic units and in so doing demand access to decision-making offices.

2. Engineer curriculum leadership, thereby providing an opportunity to highlight the critical nature of basic skills in all courses offered by the college. Do not be disinterested but become involved with curriculum

decisions even if involvement begins as observers working toward actual committee membership.

3. Consolidate efforts with student affairs personnel. Learn about their activities and seek linkages with their efforts. Learn to work with them on a continuing basis and provide an avenue for give-and-take.

4. Integrate efforts with the institutional research office, thereby facilitating input into evaluation techniques and, not unimportantly, providing a conduit for information. The business of institutional research is to provide and collect information, therefore, a link with this office in an endeavor to evaluate will promote information from the developmental program, and should result in this information being available and shared with administrators--not to mention the help and support received for the evaluation effort itself.

5. Technical faculty are usually receptive and recognize the need for competence in basic skills to use as tools for learning and for job performance. There is less need to overcome a historical perspective and an academic emphasis when working with technical faculty.

6. Be service-oriented; emphasize the range and extent of services available to help faculty teach content. Offer to provide help in developing study guides, in text review, in text analysis and other activities supportive of transmitting knowledge to content areas.

7. Try to educate the campus to the relativity of developmental study accomplishment. Work to establish the relative success rate of developmental students in relation to the success rate of the college as a whole.

8. Recognize the need for comprehensive and summative evaluation. Recognize that evaluation is more than empirical data, and that it includes professional judgment plus information that may not be totally empirical or in some instances, that empiricists would not label as evaluative data. By providing a summative evaluation there is opportunity to set an assessment in a total context and not provide data in isolation. Formative data may be used only internally for programmatic decisions. Summative data can be distributed widely when set in a proper context.

9. Evaluate to learn the total impact of the program and develop data that speaks to the total college. Develop a campus action perspective, thereby promoting the work of developmental programs.

* * * *

The second presenter, Lawrence Gray, Associate, Bureau of Grants Administration, spoke from a state level and vocational education perspective. He based his remarks on the rationale of, "If we do not take students where they are, we deny their past and give them no reason to think that the future will be any different for them."

In viewing assessment he noted the need for evaluation rooted in unsurety of knowing exactly what does work, what is affected by various program structures, and the context within which programs function. In considering evaluation he noted several concerns. One in particular was the importance of budget and money, and the need for accountability in the decision-making activities. He noted that the dollar is tied to the degree of accountability felt by decision makers.

In conjunction with perspectives he noted that labels or words do more than describe, since for many they become a way of thinking about these programs and a way of functioning relative to them. The critical concern is the awareness of students to the advantages of developmental efforts or, in fact, whether there is an advantage. To put it more precisely, the question was asked, "What is the course difference?" or the "cash difference?" "What benefit can students recognize and expect by participation?" He further stated that there is a general lack of data regarding the scope of investment in developmental programs.

* * * *

The remainder of the Task Force session was devoted to small and large group activity focusing on the three problem areas--Terminology, Factors and Issues Related to Evaluation, and Criteria/Standards. Small working groups of five participants met with a facilitator to discuss, reach group consensus and prepare a statement for each of the problem areas. Subsequent

to an allotted time period, each group reported to the total body followed by general discussion to see if there was a total group consensus. These activities resulted in a series of general statements reflecting the professional judgments of Task Force members for each problem area.

EXAMINING THE ISSUES

Problem Area #1: Terminology

To what extent can/should some consensus be reached regarding terminology? Can meaningful distinction be made among terms such as developmental, remedial, basic skills education or academic skills education?

Nature of the Problem

Terminology used in describing programs remains a continuing issue. Reflecting the research of the past decade, Phase I data indicated that descriptors of programs varied from campus to campus, and often showed a lack of clarity and meaning among individuals using the same term. The follow-up survey sought to determine choice of terms used by New York State two-year colleges to describe their local programs and courses. In response, over 60% selected developmental, followed by remedial (20%), basic skills (16%) and academic skills education (16%). Twenty percent (20%) of the respondents provided multiple responses.

Statements and Recommendations

The outcomes from work groups and total group discussions follow:

- The Task Force unanimously agreed that consensus on terminolory would be a positive factor. However, the source of specifics or impetus needed for such consensus were unclear to the group. One working group felt that consensus must be achieved statewide when defining developmental and remedial. The expressed fear was an external definition or label would be applied to all programs without advantage of practitioner input.

- The term developmental was preferred except when an external agency required use of a different term.

- Terminology becomes important for both funding and communication purposes. There was a sense that although there was lack of consensus for a specific term, many found developmental an acceptable term since it is less derogatory and more comprehensive than others.

- External agencies continue to require use of preferred terms for specified contexts regardless of meanings/definitions attached by educators.

- No one published definition was found acceptable to all since the term reflects a range of different criteria demanded by local program objectives that all programs do not totally encompass. Thus local program objectives demand a flexible or localized definition.

- A clear statement needs to be compiled by educators regarding definitions of remedial and developmental in order to clarify meaning. A suggested criterion for differentiation between developmental and remedial was in terms of time: "Developmental students need one semester, remedial students need more than one semester." This statement was set forth by one working group as an example of a clarifying statement that educators should make before an external agency does so without benefit of their input.

- Other distinctions between "developmental" and "remedial" were noted that the term developmental assumes an integrated educational perspective while remedial takes more of a band-aid approach.

- Differentiation among terms is further compounded since most programs have bits of what is generally viewed as remedial as well as developmental. The potential of one term to specifically reflect all programs was not judged feasible, even though a need for such consensus was recognized.

- It behooves each college to carefully define the local program by setting clear program intents, and to communicate that programs do vary, should vary, will vary, and will usually include both remedial and developmental strands.

- The question was raised as to the feasibility of defining developmental as part of the current session. Another raised the issue of whether or not programs are essentially developmental even though differences exist regarding specifics. Attempts were made to define developmental education but with the conclusion that such concurrence would demand further consideration by the group.

Action Summary

The members of the Task Force agreed that any consensus of understanding regarding terminology would not only aid the evaluation process, but increase the efficiency of communication with others outside the program. However, in the time allotted the Task Force was unable to reach a consensus on specifically how dimensions differentiate among the various terms used. The lack of such consensus was tied to the variance found in

programs, and the need to draw from a wide range of objectives/strategies in order to meet the broad scope of clientele needs. A majority preference was expressed for the term "developmental," but a definition acceptable to the total group was not reached at this session. The Task Force strongly recommended that under the umbrella term, developmental, each program define specific goals and objectives thereby providing a valid basis for evaluation and communication.

Problem Area #2: Factors and Issues Related to Evaluation

In what manner will/should related factors and issues influence program evaluation and judgments made as a result of these evaluations?

Nature of the Problem

Evaluation is not conducted in a vacuum. Colleges are not totally free of regulation from centralized sources. These sources impact evaluation and assessment, thus need to be acknowledged. Many are largely uncontrollable and many are external to not only the developmental program but to the college. In any instance, they become an existing reality which must be addressed in the design and implementation of any evaluation effort: state/local-level policies and regulations, economic factors, and budgetary factors both operational and student-centered (financial aid). In addition, the diversity of programs and clientele needs across the State carry other factors that ultimately relate to an evaluation design and in the selection of appropriate criteria and standards. For example, the variety of special needs groups and the variance of the severity of student deficiencies impinge on programming decisions and can lead to differences in evaluative criteria.

Statements and Recommendations

The following summary statements reflect the scope of considerations:

- Evaluation standards and procedures must vary with student characteristics, and purposes of assessments. Clientele needs should be a primary consideration in determining specific evaluative strategies.

- The diverse populations should be assessed first and developmental programs secondarily. These assessments should include student expectations.

- Evaluative data must be compatible with college structure, local faculty concerns, and budget data requested/demanded by external agencies. Evaluation was viewed as having two realities: a defensible basis for a budget, and as a marketable strand--such as lower attrition.

- The evaluation method must be budgetarily acceptable and demonstrate cost effectiveness, as well as address faculty concerns such as skill levels and competencies.

- It was generally felt that a cost benefit theme should be part of any evaluation of developmental studies programs.

- Many felt that in order to be optimally effective, evaluation should interface with other departments and college activities such as placement and admissions.

- A concern was expressed relative to defining college level deficiency as related to a local view of college level competency. This comment emphasized that evaluation starts locally, with particular concern for techniques and diagnostic tools to best reflect local structure and diversity of students.

- Many pointed to the kind of reporting required by a variety of agencies, and the impact that various types of reporting may have on clientele, external agencies and local institution.

- Existing standards are not appropriate for ESL. The changing demographics of foreign born students should be reflected by evaluation standards.

- Middle States and other such agencies should include a regional representative to better understand each college, their clientele and their programs.

- A program evaluation should be part of a larger evaluative process integrating information from all related departments.

- All colleges have some type of stated or assumed evaluation standards thus a pre-level or foundation for evaluation standards exist as a starting point for future efforts.

- A question was raised relative to the possibility of this group continuing to address these issues either as part of a professional organization or in subcommittee status in order to continue to contribute to definitions and understandings.

Action Summary

The Task Force recognized the existence of a variety of factors which impact program evaluation and are an existing reality that must be addressed in any assessment attempt. The group acknowledged that these factors must be considered which increases the need for local colleges to retain the flexibility necessary to positively reflect the achievement of the program

while at the same time address the concerns of regulatory and other external agencies. The Task Force also recommended greater attention to regional and local parameters. Statements were made raising cautions about the type of assessment tools used, encouraging the integration of evaluatory efforts with other appropriate departments/college efforts, and above all, maintain a positive approach.

Problem Area #3: Criteria and Standards

At this stage to what extent can/should consensus on criteria be achieved versus the need for local flexibility and program variance...and to what extent should consensus be reached on evaluation standards?

Nature of the Problem

Data from two phases of research resulted in identification of four criteria selected most frequently as appropriate to evaluation of developmental programs. In order of frequency relative to appropriateness to program, these criteria include: achieving exit criteria of basic skill courses, achievement of individual student goals, completion or graduation from career programs, and academic eligibility to continue programs as indicated by completion of next regular course in sequence.

Additional data were sought regarding the existence of standards as related to criteria. Criteria were often identifiable but quantification relative to success was more difficult to isolate. A majority of respondents, however, indicated that a success standard does exist for the college (80.6%), and specifically for basic skills, developmental or remedial programs (67.7%).

The notion that institutions should, in fact, establish success standards on a college-wide basis which would then serve as a framework from which to evaluate specific programs was supported by over half of the respondents. Less than half agreed that performance standards could be set for developmental programs that would be acceptable to all college constitutencies. Over 60% believe that some general standards or guidelines for assessing the effectiveness of remedial/developmental programs at different colleges could be compiled even with variability of student needs. However, commentary raised doubts as to the feasibility of application.

Statements and Recommendations

The following summarize the outcomes of each work group in the Task Force plus general discussion:

- The majority consensus regarding the four criteria serving as the basis for an evaluation model(s) was essentially, "Yes, but...." The "but" was interpreted that many of the goals reflected in the criteria/standards are common and shared by programs. However, the need for local flexibility is vital and needs support through a clear statement of local goals and objectives. Such a statement facilitates communication and reinforces local responsibility while allowing agreement in principle to the broader comprehensive criteria.

- Local flexibility needs to be maintained due to local program structure. The evaluation of programs and the differences in the programs need ongoing studies, tracking, cohort analysis, and evaluation of effectiveness of supplementary assistance such as tutoring programs.

- Flexibility is furthered by allowing actual specific criterion standards to be derived from goals of a program. The criteria are common to the extent that goals are common. If mainstreaming is a goal, then how completers of developmental programs do in subsequent courses becomes a major criteria. The standard or comparative standard is how the nondevelopmental student performs in these same courses. It becomes the college's responsibility to define the goals, the criteria and standards related to them.

- Local flexibility is based on what is needed and on what the local campus is doing. Program standards must be drawn from local college standards if they exist, and should be pursued if they do not exist. Too, campuses with similar evaluation strategies should be provided an opportunity to be linked in order to share processes.

- Not only does local flexibility in evaluation derive from the stated goals but therein a need for anecdotal or humanistic data to supplement empirical information.

- Given local flexibility there may be opportunities to generally standardize tracking of student groups, based on achievement of student goals.

- Local flexibility regarding evaluation criteria becomes especially critical since awareness of what others are doing are only sketchily known. Relative to standards, common goals are shared (such as grades in the next course, success with career goals after exit) but the extent of similarity is not readily available. A need for persistence studies, cohort

analysis plus the impact of supplemental activities on academic success was underscored.

- There was general recognition that developmental studies are currently "under an assessment gun" so to speak. Therefore, it becomes necessary to create a model or guidelines especially since other programs are not currently facing the same challenges. The basic commonality among programs is preparation for mainstreaming into credit courses by helping students overcome deficiencies. It was, therefore, maintained that criteria should be derived from the goals of the program, what you're trying to do and then to determine if, in fact, it is successful. The most acceptable criteria and goals are judged in terms of, "Do they prepare the student for mainstreaming? How do the students perform in regular courses compared to the 'regular' students?" In other words, success becomes determinable in relation to the performance of regular students in credit courses. Developmental students should measure at the same level. If so, the developmental program is effective. The cost effectiveness dimension is important, especially since it adds to the FTE count in the mainstreamed or credit courses.

- It was suggested that a statewide assessment on a college-by-college basis may be appropriate, if in so doing, planning for assessment is in terms of local college goals. This approach would facilitate evaluation.

- Acceptance of a universal goal of mainstreaming and the success of completers in subsequent courses compared to the normal students in the same courses brings acceptance of criteria that reflect that goal. Relative to standards, as many students as possible may serve as a starting point. More enlightened understanding should be developed locally, thereby allowing developmental outcomes to be compared to college-wide data. This results in college-wide data serving as a standard.

- Because of local autonomy regarding attitudinal dimensions, clientele served, source of budget, and other factors, the outlook for statewide consensus of similar evaluation patterns is dim.

- One suggestion was use of the Middle States' model--already acceptable in the State. It might serve as an approach to gather and summarize data since many programs do provide for pretesting which could lead to some standards for degree and nondegree students. Also differences might exist relative to differences in student goals. Such an approach would add to the flexibility of goals. Tracking over time is regarded as a useful technique in this approach.

Action Summary

The Task Force agreed that the four criteria (exit criteria of basic skill courses, achievement of individual student goals, completion/graduation from career programs and academic eligibility to continue) were acceptable as general criteria. The criteria provided an acceptable basis since they reflect many of the common goals shared by a variety of programs. The Task Force underscored, however, the need for local flexibility in order to accurately reflect program structure. Relative to standards, the Task Force further recommended that standards be drawn from local existing standards or commonly accepted levels of achievement for other programs. As with terminology, it was recommended that programs clarify their specific goals and objectives which would then allow specific criterion standards to be derived from the goals of the program. The Task Force generally felt that basic commonality of goals does exist among programs. In reality a beginning standard of achievement might be stated as successful completion by as many students as possible,--although it was recognized that this is not adequate. It was further suggested that through comparisons with performance of nondevelopmental students and its criteria/standards, better program standards will evolve.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS REACHED

The Task Force activities resulted in statements within each problem area that reflect the degree of consensus and recommended actions. In addition other related concerns were highlighted. As a result, the process was viewed as a beginning that should be continued by professional developmental educators.

The major areas of consensus are summarized as follows:

- Clarity of terminology may be crucial in certain cohorts, such as grant activities, official communication, and adhering to regulations and understanding of policy statements regarding programs. A consensus in the use of terms would facilitate communication and understanding between campuses. However, there are factors which deter consensus, the tendencies of programs to contain elements of both remedial and developmental, and the existence of extreme variance in program goals and clientele among campuses. A general awareness exists that if some degree of consensus is not provided by the field, definition and interpretations could well be superimposed externally.
- A variety of factors and issues which impinge on evaluation practices and processes are acknowledged such as budget procedures, student demographics, college structure, intent/use and application of data and variety of assessment tools used. These factors are a consideration of any evaluation and must be dealt with as realistically as possible through recognition and incorporation of the factors in a proactive meaningful manner. No evaluation is conducted in a vacuum.

- The criteria and standards identified by survey data are acceptable to a degree--up to the point of need for local flexibility in use and interpretation. Specific local program evaluations should incorporate a statement of clear local goals with the specific evaluation processes, criteria and standards stemming from these goal statements.
- A partial consensus on a program standard was reached and generally defined as the capability of developmental students to function at the same level as nondevelopmental students in chosen degree career courses subsequent to completion of a developmental program to overcome skill deficiencies. The four criteria (achieve exit criteria, academic eligibility to continue, completion of program, achievement of individual student goals) are essentially components of this general success statement.
- At the same time there was a general acknowledgment that some students are admitted with deficiencies so severe that one or two semesters will not prepare them to function effectively in college level courses. Thus, while colleges generally agree, assessment specifics will vary and local flexibility based on goals, clientele and local college standards must be allowed.

In retrospect, the achieved outcomes of the Task Force were greater than had been anticipated given the allotted time. Initial consensus was achieved not only for each of the major issues, but also, in terms of the concerns and problems related to evaluation affecting all two-year programs in the State. The high level of integrity and insights exhibited by each of the professionals serving on the Task Force

were responsible for the insightful treatment of the issues and specification of recommendations or further questions. The Task Force has provided a forum for exchange and continued interaction among these professionals who will be finding the appropriate strategies and will bear the responsibility for enacting appropriate actions in order to address each major concern and other issues as they emerge.

ADDENDUM: SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE SESSION II

The second session of the Task Force, an outgrowth of the May meeting, had two major functions: discussion of local program and evaluation highlights, and further consideration of terminology--specifically the meaning and usage of developmental and remedial as program descriptors. The program and evaluation strategy at each college was described by respective Task Force participants with subsequent discussion by the total group. Since terminology was a continued activity from the May session, discussion focused primarily on terms used in state/local documents and policy statements/expectations others hold for programs based on selected terminology.

A summary of the discussion regarding terminology follows. Evaluation and program descriptions are outlined elsewhere.[1]

Term: Developmental

Several Task Force members suggested that a program is developmental if its major goal is improvement of academic skills to a level that permits successful completion of mainstreamed career courses. These programs consist of ongoing processes which lead to the acquisition of skills necessary to accomplish the tasks of learning. Developmental programs deal with students at any point of need and often extend beyond academic skills to include coping skills, and decision-making about life-direction and purpose. Such programs might use a variety of instructional and counseling strategies such as tutoring, advisement, modules and directed and independent study at learning centers.

Thus, developmental programs were defined as those efforts designed to elevate, in a relatively short period of time, academic skills to a level that allows successful completion of college-level career courses.

Term: Remedial

A program was viewed as remedial when its major intent is

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[1] Assessment of Effectiveness of Developmental Programs in Postsecondary Occupational Education: Phase II. Albany, NY: Two-Year College Development Center, SUNY-Albany, September 1984.

assistance to students with deficiencies in academic skills which prohibit functioning in college level career courses or programs. The educational effort increases skill competencies to enable students to achieve a minimum entry level for beginning college-level career courses. Some perceive the competency level related not only to beginning technical courses, but also selected developmental courses.

Thus remedial programs were viewed as instructional efforts designed to ameliorate deficiencies in academic skills to a level of satisfying minimum entry requirement of college career programs.

Concluding Statements & Recommendations

The major areas of concern and consensus derived from the second session of the Task Force are subsequently summarized:

- If programs have to be labeled the consensus was for use of developmental as an umbrella term with specification through goals and objectives of each respective program. In general, remedial was viewed less favorably as a term relative to college programming since, given current conditions, remediation according to some definitions, should not be addressed at collegiate levels. There was also some concern that perhaps the philosophical or pedagogical use of some terms had been lost to a priority on procedural or economic solutions to current problems.

- A need for clarity of teminology was seen in order to promote understanding of policies set forth by regulatory agencies under which programs must operate--State Education Department, State University of New York and others.

- Interested professionals should continually be aware and consider all policy statements, and to the extent possible, help each other by facilitating dissemination of information that might be to each other's benefit.

- Local programs and institutions should quantify and document, as well as identify projected competencies rather than describe program intent in global terms. Specification will eventually lead to better understanding by local faculty, administration and sponsoring agencies. With understanding comes a greater degree of acceptance, expanded institutional support and increased success potential when coupled with appropriate evidence supporting results.

DATA SUMMARY

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTIVENESS: DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS
IN POSTSECONDARY OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION--PHASE II

VEA 58-84-9378

Two-Year College Development Center
State University of New York at Albany

1984

Purpose: *To update and expand Phase I data results*

Data Collection Strategy: *Follow-up mail survey to responding institutions*

Response Rate: *66.7%*

Total N: *32 two-year colleges*

Data Source Sample:

59.5% State University of New York Community Colleges
15.3% State University Agricultural and Technical Colleges
12.6% City University of New York
9.4% Independents
3.2% Educational Opportunity Centers

1. Reported changes in local developmental/remedial/basic skill programs from 1983-1984:

54.8% - yes *45.2% - no change*

- *Type of change -*
  - *program format - 52.9%*
    - *entrance criteria - 17.6%*
    - *credit/non-credit status - 41.2%*
    - *course time frame - 58.8%*
  - *placement tests - 41.2%*
    - *mandated placement - 47.1%*
    - *recommended placement - 23.5%*
    - *student decision to enroll - 17.6%*
    - *retest - 5.8%*
  - *faculty source - 23.5%*
  - *program budget source - 29.4%*
  - *supplemental services*
    - *reinforcement of basic skills - 11.7%*
    - *designated transitional courses - 17.6%*
    - *lab/learning center - 11.7%*
    - *mediated materials - 5.8%*
    - *tutoring - 17.6%*
    - *computer-assisted instruction - 17.6%*
    - *counseling/targeted advisement - 11.7%*
    - *peer support groups - 5.8%*

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- success criteria - 17.6%
- systematic collection of data
  - achieve exit criteria of courses - 23.5%
  - enrollment in subsequent regular courses
  - GPA comparison - 17.6%
  - retention rate by semester
- ideal data
  - effectiveness of supplementary services
  - comparable costs - 17.6%
  - persistence in light of student goals

II. Preferred description of local program

- Developmental 61.3%
- Remedial 20.0%
- Basic Skills Education 16.6%
- Academic Skills Education 16.6%

(20% provided multiple responses)

III. Verified program success criteria

Criteria	Very appropriate to college program	Moderately appropriate to college program	Somewhat appropriate to college program	Not appropriate	Mean Rating
1. Achieving exit criteria of basic skill courses	48.3%	29.[illegible]	3.2%	6.4%	3.4
2. Academic eligibility to continue program as indicated by completion of next regular course in sequence to developmental/remedial/basic skill courses	35.4%	19.3%	9.6%	19.3%	2.7
3. Completion or graduation from career program	16.1%	38.7%	12.9%	16.1%	2.6
4. Achievement of individual student goals	32.3%	38.7%	3.2%	9.6%	3.0
5. Other criteria (specify):					
Academic coping skills	3.2%	-	-	-	
Persistence	3.2%	-	-	-	
Employment	-	3.2%	-	-	

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IV. Existence of standards

- *Existence of success standard for college:*
  - *80.6% yes*
  - *3.2% no*
  - *6.4% yes & no*
  - *3.2% don't know*
  - *3.2% no response*
- *Existence of success standard for basic skills/ developmental/remedial program:*
  - *67.7% yes*
  - *22.5% no*
  - *6.4% don't know*
  - *3.2% no response*

	Agree	Disagree	Mixed Feelings
Institutions should establish college-wide success standards which could then serve as the basis for evaluating specific programs such as basic skills/ developmental/remedial.	*58.1%*	*16.1%*	*16.1%*
Performance standards can be set for developmental/remedial/basic skills programs that will be acceptable academically, socially, and politically.	*45.2%*	*6.4%*	*38.7%*
General standards or guidelines for assessing the effectiveness of developmental/remedial programs at different colleges should be established given the range and variability of student needs found at New York State two-year institutions.	*64.5%*	*3.2%*	*25.8%*

V. Criteria standards by frequency

- *Criterion #1 - (achieve exit criteria of courses)*

f	standard	f	measurement
41.9%	*as many students as possible* ⟶	*69.2%*	*posttest score*
		53.8%	*classroom activities*
		16.1%	*lab assignments*
		16.1%	*course grade*
		16.1%	*cum average*

f	standard	f	measurement
30.8%	75% of students →	75.0%	posttest score
		66.7%	classroom activities
		25.0%	complete course
		25.0%	course grade
9.7%	50% of students →	33.3%	exit interview
		33.3%	posttest score
		33.3%	exit exam
6.5%	40% of students →	50.0%	posttest score
		50.0%	specific exit criteria
3.2%	5% of students →	100.0%	exit interview
7.9%	(no response)		

- Criterion #2 - (achieve individual goals)

f	standard	f	measurement
32.2%	as many students as possible →	80.0%	percentage of students achieving goal
		20.0%	percentage of students achieving goal in specified time period
		10.0%	academic progress/career choice
6.4%	75% of students →	100.0%	percentage of students achieving goal
3.2%	40% of students →	100.0%	percentage of students achieving goal
58.2%	(no response)		

- *Criterion #3 - (completion/graduation of program)*

f	standard	f	measurement
25.8%	as many students as possible →	75.0%	graduation rate
		37.5%	graduation rate within specified time period
16.1%	40% of students →	20.0%	graduation rate
		80.0%	graduation rate within specified time period
6.5%	50% of students →	100.0%	graduation rate
3.2%	75% of students →	100.0%	graduation rate
3.2%	30% of students →	100.0%	graduation rate
3.2%	depends on overall rate →	100.0%	graduation rate
42.0%	(no response)		

- *Criterion #4 - (academic eligibility)*

f	standard	f	measurement
45.1%	as many students as possible →	57.1%	eligible to continue
		42.8%	favorable passing rate in program course
		21.4%	favorable GPA in a subsequent semester
		7.1%	GPA as defined
12.9%	75% of students →	50.0%	favorable GPA in a subsequent semester
		50.0%	favorable passing rate in program sequence
		25.0%	eligible to continue
9.7%	50% of students →	66.7%	favorable GPA in a subsequent semester
		33.4%	favorable passing rate in a program sequence
6.5%	85%/90% of students →	100.0%	eligible to continue
		50.0%	favorable GPA in a subsequent semester
3.2%	40% of students →	100.0%	eligible to continue
22.6%	(no response)		

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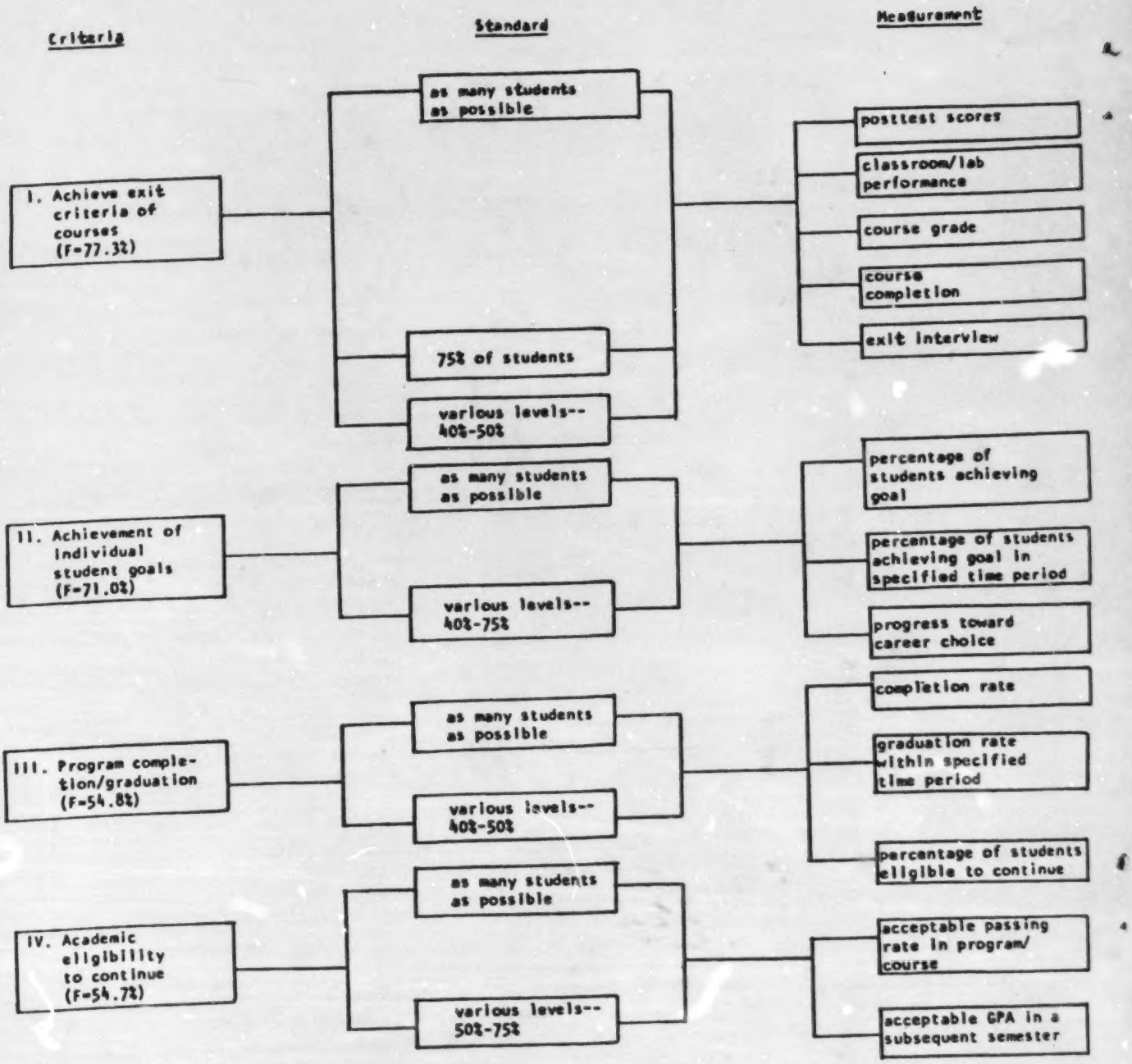
VI. Evaluation Model Based on Selected Criteria and Standards



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VII. Selected Summary of Evaluation Results

Based on the outcomes from local applications of the model plus input from sites and other colleges, the following statements reflect the success level of developmental programs in New York State two-year colleges:

- The proportion of students achieving developmental skill course exit criteria exceeds the proportion who fail.
- Students who successfully complete a developmental skill program or set of courses usually achieve a subsequent success rate which is comparable to the overall success rate of the college.
- Students who do not successfully complete the developmental courses are more likely to fail in subsequent regular courses.
- Developmental students who achieve success in a subsequent semester of regular or mainstreamed courses are more likely to achieve success with each succeeding successful semester.
- Most developmental students require a minimum of 2½-3 years to complete a degree.
- Increasingly, developmental programs are attempting to incorporate specific and/or prerequisite skills necessary to function in career content areas, and are doing so through peer content faculty cooperation.
- Pre and post-testing, using the respective placement tests, usually result in gain scores for a majority of students who meet exit criteria.
- Students initiating self-referral for additional work demonstrate a higher overall success rate than students who do not seek additional help.

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